

Portland, Ore. – Today Congressman Blumenauer (D-Ore.) issued the following statement on the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war:

“Today is another sad day for our country as we mark the fifth year of bloodshed and violence in Iraq. Sixty-seven Oregonians, along with another 4,231 brave men and women from around the nation and hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, have died in President Bush’s mismanaged and ill-conceived war. I continue to believe that the best way to honor those whose lives have been lost in this tragic war is to end it as quickly as possible.

“Frustrations with Congress are understandable, as I feel them myself. I authored legislation which would have begun withdrawing our troops within 30 days of passage and introduced a bill to help the millions of Iraqi refugees displaced by the war. Yet tragically we remain in Iraq – spending almost \$2.5 billion each week – because of this administration’s stubborn refusal to face reality and begin a new direction in the Middle East.

“In 307 days, we will have a new President, and I am doing all I can to make sure a change in the White House means a change in the course of the Iraq war. In the meantime, I remain committed to getting our troops out of Iraq now and providing our veterans with the best care available.”

Congressman Blumenauer has opposed the Iraq war from the start. In January of 2007 he introduced H.R.663, the “New Direction for Iraq Act of 2007,” which would require the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq, initiate a new diplomatic offensive to stabilize Iraq and increase aggressive efforts at oversight and accountability.

Congressman Blumenauer has also been a leader on the issue of Iraqi refugees. In May of 2007 he introduced the “Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act,” H.R.2265, the first comprehensive bill to address the crisis in which 4 million Iraqis have been displaced from their homes. Much of this bill was included in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2008 and signed into law earlier this year.

He recently joined with leaders of the Progressive Caucus and Out of Iraq Caucuses in sponsoring H.R.5507, the “Fully-Funded United States Military Redeployment and Sovereignty of Iraq Restoration Act of 2008.” This legislation would end the Iraq War within a year, allow US support for an international force if requested by the Iraqi government, close the detention centers, and support reconciliation efforts in Iraq.

In September, he pledged to vote “no” on any more requests for funding for Iraq, except those which is necessary to withdraw U.S. troops. Congressman Blumenauer has also signed the Oregon Declaration of Peace, affirming his commitment to ending the war.

